

## Chapter 1: Introduction

- This is the oldest written account of martyrdom outside of the New Testament.
- This account was recorded by church in Smyrna and sent to other churches.
- Took place between 155-165 in Smyrna, during Marcus Aurelius' reign.
- Polycarp's faithful death was seen as ending the persecutions.
- His death is meant to be the pattern martyrs should follow.
- Polycarp followed the example of Christ.
- Is Caesar Lord or Christ?

## Chapter 2: Other Martyrs

- Every martyr's death is according to God's will.
- The faith of the martyr's is to be admired and imitated.
- Christ was with them in suffering.
- They became like angels and resisted the devil.

## Chapter 3-4: Quintus and Germanicus

- Germanicus was a Christian sentenced to be killed by wild beasts.
- The officials tried to persuade him to not throw his youth away and deny Christ.
- Germanicus refused and instead dragged the animals closer to himself.
- Quintus is a negative example for would be martyrs to avoid.
- Quintus sought out martyrdom intentionally, and failed because of it.
- The gospel does not encourage seeking martyrdom.

## Chapter 5: Polycarp

- The authorities are seeking to kill Polycarp because he is a leader in the church.
- He wanted to stay, but the church persuaded him to hide.
- His habit was to pray for all of the churches in the world.
- He prophesied that he would be burned alive.

## Chapter 6-8: The Arrest

- He could not longer avoid arrest.
- Mirrors Christ's arrest by being betrayed and involvement of a Herod.
- He could have escaped again, but he stayed submitting to God's will.
- The soldiers came heavily armed and were surprised by Polycarp.
- He received them as guests and served them dinner.
- He asked for an hour to pray.
- They were amazed by his godliness and regretted having to arrest him.
- He prayed for everyone he knew.
- He refuses to call Caesar Lord. "What harm is there?"
- He bruises his shin but enters the stadium as if uninjured.

## Chapter 9-11: The "Trial"

- Polycarp, and others, hear a voice from heaven encouraging him.
- They tell him to act his age.
- They want him to blaspheme and denounce the "atheists," which are Christians.
- Polycarp refused to blaspheme Christ.
- He offers to teach the proconsul Christian doctrine, but will not appeal to the crowd.
- Polycarp refuses to "repent" and warns to proconsul of the fire to come.

## Chapter 12-16: His Death

- Polycarp was filled with grace, but the crowds were enraged.
- The crowd cried out for Polycarp to be burned and aids in building the fire.
- Polycarp removes his own clothes and does not flee the flames.
- They tie him instead of nailing him, like a sacrifice, and prays.
- The fire burned, but would not kill him.
- They stabbed him and out came a dove and his blood extinguished the fire.
- His death amazed the crowd and proved his apostolic and prophetic origins.

## Chapter 17: His Body

- They cremated his body and refused to hand it over to the Christians there.
- They took some of his bones.
- The church will gather and celebrate on act anniversary of his martyrdom to prepare those who will follow in his footsteps.
- Polycarp was the 12th martyr from the church in Smyrna and the supreme example.

## Concluding Thoughts

- Polycarp is the example of what martyrdom should look like. He does not seek it out, but faces it headmen with charity, grace, and faith.
- Persecution and martyrdom are blessings given from God.
- I don't see any reason to doubt the occurrence of these miracles.